

Butterflies in the Garden

Of the many creatures at home in the garden, few can match the grace and beauty of butterflies. They are important pollinators and a delight to see in any garden.

A garden that includes plants for the entire life cycle will attract a variety of native butterflies. Butterfly larvae need host plants for food and as a place to pupate, while adult butterflies require nectar sources for food and plants for egg-laying.

Tips for Planting a Butterfly Garden

- Place your garden in a sunny place and provide rocks for butterflies to bask in the sun. Butterflies are sun-lovers and cannot fly until the sun's warmth heats their bodies.
- Group plants together to create a mass of color.
- Plant shrubs and trees nearby to offer a hiding place from predators and to shelter butterflies from the wind.
- Provide moisture. Butterflies extract water and minerals from damp soil.
- Avoid pesticides. They kill butterflies and their caterpillars.

To attract a diversity of butterflies and other pollinators in your garden, select a variety of plants with different floral colors, shapes, sizes and bloom times. The following plants are native to the Mid-Atlantic region and are listed based on their benefit for the different butterfly stages.

Caterpillar Host Plants	Plants for Nectar Sources
Trees	Shrubs
* <i>Salix caroliniana</i> (willow)	* <i>Symphytotrichum</i> spp., <i>Eurybais</i> spp., etc. (aster species)
* <i>Asimina triloba</i> (pawpaw)	* <i>Coreopsis verticillata</i> (whorled tickseed)
* <i>Betula nigra</i> (river birch)	* <i>Echinacea</i> spp. (coneflower)
* <i>Carpinus caroliniana</i> (American hornbeam)	* <i>Eupatorium fistulosum</i> (Joe Pye weed)
* <i>Cercis canadensis</i> (Eastern redbud)	* <i>Gaillardia x grandiflora</i> (blanket flower)
* <i>Cornus florida</i> (dogwood)	* <i>Gaura lindheimeri</i> (Lindheimer's beeblossom)
* <i>Juniperus virginiana</i> (Eastern red cedar)	* <i>Heliopsis helianthoides</i> (smooth oxeye)
* <i>Ptelea trifoliata</i> (common hop-tree)	* <i>Hibiscus x moscheutos</i> (rose-mallow)
* <i>Sassafras albidum</i> (sassafras)	* <i>Nepeta x faassenii</i> (giant catmint)
* <i>Quercus velutina</i> (oak trees)	* <i>Oenothera</i> spp. (evening primrose)
Shrubs	* <i>Phlox carolina</i> (thickleaf phlox)
* <i>Lindera benzoin</i> (spicebush)	* <i>Phlox paniculata</i> (fall phlox)
* <i>Rhus</i> spp. (sumac)	* <i>Parthenium integrifolium</i> (American feverfew)
* <i>Viburnum dentatum</i>	* <i>Rudbeckia fulgida</i> (Black-eyed Susan)
Herbaceous Perennials	* <i>Sedum</i> spp.
* <i>Antennaria plantaginifolia</i> (pussy toes)	
* <i>Symphytotrichum</i> spp., <i>Eurybais</i> spp., etc. (aster species)	
* <i>Asclepias incarnata</i> (swamp milkweed)	
* <i>Chelone glabra</i> , <i>C. lyonii</i> (turtlehead)	

Grasses

- * *Panicum virgatum* (switchgrass)
- * *Penstemon digitalis* (talus slope penstemon)